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## THE FIRST TWO READERS OF PETRARCH'S TALE OF GRISELDA

The letter which Petrarch wrote to Boccaccio on June 8,<sup>1</sup> 1374,<sup>2</sup> only a few weeks before his own death, describes the effect produced by the reading of the tale of Griselda upon two friends of Petrarch's, one a Paduan and the other a Veronese. As translated by Professor Robinson,<sup>3</sup> this part of the letter (*Opera*, 1581, p. 546) runs:

In the first place, I gave it to one of our mutual friends in Padua to read, a man of excellent parts and wide attainments. When scarcely halfway through the composition, he was suddenly arrested by a burst of tears. When again, after a short pause, he made a manful attempt to continue, he was again interrupted by a sob. He then realized that he could go no farther himself, and handed the story to one of his companions, a man of education, to finish. How others may view the occurrence I cannot, of course, say; for myself, I put a most favorable construction upon it, believing that I recognize the indications of a most compassionate disposition; a more kindly nature, indeed, I never remember to have met. As I saw him weep as he read, the words of the Satirist came back to me:

Nature, who gave us tears, by that alone  
Proclaims she made the feeling heart our own;  
And 't is our noblest sense.

—Juvenal xv. 131 (Gifford's translation)

<sup>1</sup> VI Idus Junius. Mather renders as June 10.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Mather, in *Mod. Lang. Notes*, XII (1897), 1ff. For confirmation of this date, see De Sade, *Mémoires*, III, 797; Blanc, in Ersch und Gruber, *Allg. Encyc.*, III, 19, 242; Baldelli, *Del Petrarca* (1797), p. 320; Bromly, in *Athenæum*, Nov. 19, 1898; Fracassetti, in *Lettere . . . delle Cose Familiari*, III, 21. Robinson and Rolfe inadvertently assign the whole letter to 1373.

<sup>3</sup> Robinson and Rolfe, *Petrarch*, pp. 195-96.

Some time after, another friend of ours, from Verona (for all is common between us, even our friends), having heard of the effect produced by the story in the first instance, wished to read it for himself. I readily complied, as he was not only a good friend, but a man of ability. He read the narrative from beginning to end, without stopping once. Neither his face nor his voice betrayed the least emotion, not a tear or a sob escaped him. "I too," he said at the end, "would have wept, for the subject certainly excites pity, and the style is well adapted to call forth tears, and I am not hard-hearted; but I believed, and still believe, that this is all an invention."

Who were these two men, upon whom the tale produced such very different effects? This question, so far as I am aware, has never been mooted.

The Paduan was, it appears: (1) an intimate of Petrarch's; (2) a friend also of Boccaccio's; (3) a man of sensibility; (4) of rank such as to be attended by a suite.<sup>1</sup>

With what Paduan of high rank, brilliant parts, extensive knowledge, and compassionate disposition, a friend, too, of Boccaccio's, was Petrarch intimately enough acquainted to furnish the occasion for this incident?

Only one man, I believe, fulfils all these conditions, and that is Francesco da Carrara, Lord of Padua, known in later times as Francesco il Vecchio, because his son, also named Francesco (Novello, or Junior), was Lord of Padua from June to November, 1388, upon his father's abdication.

1. That Francesco da Carrara was an intimate of Petrarch's is shown by the following facts:

a) His father, Giacomo da Carrara (Lord of Padua 1345-50) was much attached to Petrarch,<sup>2</sup> who repaid him with the utmost gratitude and esteem, and composed his epitaph<sup>3</sup> after his assassination on December 21, 1350.

b) Francesco frequently visited Petrarch at Arquà.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This I infer from the Latin: "Eam uni suorum comitum, docto satis viro, legendam tradidit." Here the word *comes*, especially as used in the plural, suggests, in contrast with, say, *sodalis*, a member of a retinue. Then, whatever the precise sense that one attributes to *satis*, it is evident that Petrarch, in his "docto satis viro," intimates a degree of inferiority to the "vir altissimi ingenii, multiplicisque notitiae" (cf. "vir ingentis sapientiae," below, p. 131, note 5).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Fam.* xi. 2, 3; *Letter to Posterity* (cf. Robinson and Rolfe, pp. 74-75); *Sen.* x. 2, for which see Fracassetti, *op. cit.*, II, 86.

<sup>3</sup> See Fracassetti, III, 33.

<sup>4</sup> *Var.* 31; Fracassetti, V, 320; cf. III, 26; Verci, *Storia della Marca Trivigiana*, XIV, 148; Cittadella, *Storia della Dominazione Carrarese*, I, 284-85.

c) On Petrarch's return from Pavia in July, 1368, Francesco came to the gate of the city to meet him, sent his servants to Petrarch's home with gifts, and went himself in the evening with his suite to visit him, stayed to supper, and afterward conversed with Petrarch till bedtime (*Sen. xi. 2: Opera*, 1581, p. 883).<sup>1</sup>

d) Petrarch's last public act was to accompany Francesco Novello to Venice, and there speak (October 3, 1373) before the senate, when the heir to the dominion of Padua proffered his father's apologies at the conclusion of the war between the two states. This was at the particular request of Francesco, the father.<sup>2</sup>

e) In his will, dated April 4, 1370, Petrarch bequeathed to Francesco a picture of the Virgin by Giotto, saying he possessed nothing worthy of him.

f) Petrarch addressed to Francesco his treatise, *De republica optime administranda*,<sup>3</sup> which begins with praises of the prince.

g) Petrarch dedicated to Francesco his *De viris illustribus*.<sup>4</sup>

h) Francesco, according to Petrarch, loved him as a son,<sup>5</sup> just as Francesco's father had loved him as a brother.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Cum paucis ad me veniens, ac coenanti adsidens, et post coenam illic inter libros in noctem usque concubiam comitatus confabulationibus colloquisque gratissimis."

<sup>2</sup> *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, XIX, 751; Verci, XIV, 231-32; Cittadella, I, 337; Fulin, in *Petrarca e Venezia* (Venice, 1874), pp. 310-27; Körting, *Petrarca's Leben und Werke*, p. 444; Fracassetti, *Lettere . . . delle Cose Familiari*, I, 180; III, 26.

<sup>3</sup> *Opera*, 1581, pp. 372-86.

<sup>4</sup> Edited by Razzolini (Bologna, 1874-79). For the dedication, see Körting, *op. cit.*, p. 594, and compare Nohac, *Pétrarque et l'Humanisme*, 2d ed., p. 4: "Les bienfaits qu'il reçut de François de Carrare, vers la fin de sa vie, le décidèrent. Le seigneur de Padoue était digne de cet honneur par l'intérêt sincère qu'il portait aux lettres et à l'Antiquité, ce qui recommande sa mémoire comme celle d'un des premiers princes de la Renaissance."

<sup>5</sup> *Sen. xv. 5 (Opera*, 1581, p. 938), written in 1373: "Locorum dominus, vir ingentis sapientiae, non me ut dominus, sed ut filius diligit atque honorat, et per seipsum sic affectus, et magnanimi patris memor, qui me dilexit ut fratrem."

<sup>6</sup> The relative ages of Petrarch and the two Carraras can only be approximately ascertained. According to Litta (*Famiglie Celebri Italiane*, II, Milan, 1825), Giacomo, the father, was married twice, in 1318 and 1341, and Francesco in 1345, Francesco Novello being born May 19, 1359 (Brown, *Studies in the History of Venice*, I, 128, says 1352). Since Petrarch was born in 1304, Giacomo must have been somewhat older, for, although marriages were then often contracted at an early age (Novello was married at twenty to a bride of fourteen, see p. 137), yet we can hardly suppose Giacomo to have been married at fourteen (he was accounted old before his death in 1393; see *R.I.S.*, XVII, 814). Francesco cannot have been born before 1319, and was of an age to marry in 1345. If we suppose him to have been born in 1325, he would have been old enough to marry in 1345, and young enough for Petrarch to regard him as a son, since there would have been twenty-one years between their ages.

i) Francesco was something of a poet himself, and may have been indebted to Petrarch in the composition or polishing of his verses,<sup>1</sup> though his *capitoli* on the loss and recovery of Padua, the only specimens of his poetry preserved to us, were written in November, 1389, more than fifteen years after Petrarch's death.<sup>2</sup>

j) Francesco attended the funeral of Petrarch<sup>3</sup> at Arquà (a dozen miles from Padua), where every honor was shown to the dead poet.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Fracassetti, III, 26; Lami, *Deliciae Eruditorum*, XIV, xii; Cittadella, I, 469-70.

<sup>2</sup> The following account of a journey by Francesco Novello from Piedmont over the Mont Cenis to the abbey of St. Antoine, seven and one-half miles northwest of St. Marcellin, near the Isère, between Grenoble and Valence, affords a fair specimen of his father's poetic merits. The description of the journey and of Savoy may be compared with *The Last Months of Chaucer's Earliest Patron* (Trans. Conn. Acad. of Arts and Sciences, XXI, 42). It will be noticed that line 15 contains an allusion (*l'ultima sera*) to Dante, *Purg.*, Bk. 1, 58. The extract is from Lami, *Deliciae Eruditorum*, XVI, xviii-xix of this part:

Prese comiato, uscì fuor della porta,  
Per uscir fuor del Piamonte paese,  
Ver Mon Caler prese la via più corta.  
Camminando arrivò nel Savogiese,  
E quì ne licenziò la scorta fida,  
E'n verso suso montò in Mon Senese.  
O beati color, che in Dio si fida,  
E che gli son divoti e riverenti,  
E che'l disidran per lor scorta e guida.  
Salendo il monte sentiva gran venti,  
Ma tanto andò, che giunse alla Ferrera,  
Ove per freddo gli batteva i denti.  
E io, el ver dirò, così m'avera.  
Che io v' ebbi sì gran freddo d'Agosto,  
Ch' io mi pensai sentir l'ultima sera.  
E quella ritornando al suo proposto  
Disse, Qui si conviene aver brigata  
Per poter trapassar l'Alpe più tosto.  
Che gli era tanto il ghiaccio e la gelata,  
Che non si conoscea vie nè sentiere,  
Siccome tu vedesti altra fiata.  
Passando Mon Senese, poi mestiere  
Fu di pigliar la via verso quel Santo,  
Ch' è presso a tre giornate [a quel quartiere?]  
Ma quì mi piacque riposare alquanto,  
E lassar gir zoso [giuso] volse l'Acquabella,  
Che'l terreno è sicuro in ogni canto.  
Del Savoin paese si novella,  
Aver la gente sua tanto piacevole,  
Che pochi luoghi trovo par di quella.  
E la contrada è tanto dilettevole,  
E ubertosa di campi e di broli,  
E d'ulvi e di vigne ben fruttevole.  
Quivì è ogni diletto, che tu vuoi,  
Come di pesci, uccelli, o di cacciare,  
E orsi, e cervi, e daini, e cavriuoli.  
Per que', che io mi possa ricordare,  
Tanta lustizia troval in quel paese,  
Ch' ognun sicuramente vi può andare.

<sup>3</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 213-14; Cittadella, I, 351; cf. my article in *Romanic Review*, VIII, 222-24.

<sup>4</sup> A large part of Petrarch's books passed, after his death, into the possession of Francesco (Nolhac, I, 99, who says this was due to his love of antiquity and his respect for the poet). On the friendship of Petrarch and Francesco, see, in general, Cittadella, I, 284-86; Körting, pp. 433-34; Calthrop, *Petrarch*, p. 292. Lami, *Deliciae Eruditorum*, XIV, prints a poem by Zenone da Pistoia on the death of Petrarch, written the same year, 1374; this contains various references to the friendship between Petrarch and Francesco da Carrara, for which see pp. x-xii.

2. It cannot be proved that Boccaccio was a friend of Francesco da Carrara, but that he had had the opportunity to meet him is rendered very probable by the fact that he was in Padua with Petrarch on two different occasions, in 1351 and 1368—the first time when Francesco, with his uncle Giacomino (Jacopino), had but recently (December 22, 1350) succeeded to his father; the second, less than six years before Petrarch wrote to him in 1374. The first of these visits was to bring the letter from the Florentine government inviting Petrarch to return as professor to that city. Boccaccio appears to have arrived early in April, 1351, and to have spent several days with Petrarch,<sup>1</sup> in occupations which Boccaccio described in a letter of July 18, 1353.<sup>2</sup> Concerning the visit of 1368, we learn from a letter of Petrarch's (*Sen. x. 5*), written on October 3, that Boccaccio had left Padua, and, from another to the same friend shortly before (*Sen. x. 4*), that Boccaccio was then with him. As Petrarch had not returned to Padua from Pavia till July 19,<sup>3</sup> it is evident that Boccaccio must have arrived after this date. We thus know that Francesco was in Padua on July 19, and that he was there on October 28,<sup>4</sup> and we have no reason to think he was absent between those dates; hence on this occasion, too, Boccaccio may well have met him.

3. Francesco's sensibility is authenticated by Petrarch in his treatise, *On the Best Method of Administering a State*, addressed, as we have seen, to that ruler. Discoursing on the means by which a prince may gain the affection of his subjects, after laying down certain general principles, he adds:<sup>5</sup> "But there are other means of winning love, slighter, indeed, but effectual; I grant that they are hard for arrogant rulers, but they are easy and pleasant for a soul inclined to humanity. They are these—to pity, to console, to visit, to encourage. In these arts no one is your superior. Employ them whenever

<sup>1</sup> Fracassetti, III, 40, 43.

<sup>2</sup> Corazzini, *Lettere* (Florence, 1877), pp. 391–94; Körting, *Boccaccio's Leben und Werke*, p. 192.

<sup>3</sup> See my paper, *The Last Months of Chaucer's Earliest Patron* (*Trans. Conn. Acad. of Arts and Sciences*, XXI, p. 84).

<sup>4</sup> Verri, XIV, *Documenti*, pp. 30–31.

<sup>5</sup> *Opera*, 1581, pp. 379–80: "Sunt et alia leviora ad captandum amorem, tamen efficacia; superbis fateor dura principibus, sed, ubi se ad humanitatem animus inclinavit, et facilia et jucunda. Ea vero sunt huiusmodi—compati, consolari, visitare, alloqui. . . . Et harum quoque artium nullus abundantior est quam tu. Illis utere; naturamque tuam sequere; sic optato provenient universa."

possible. By thus following your own nature, you will find everything give way to your desires."

It is true that Francesco imprisoned his uncle Giacomino in 1355, and kept him in captivity till his death in 1372; but it was after he had compassed Francesco's death by poison, as was clearly proved by the confession of his accomplice and agent, and the discovery of the poison.<sup>1</sup>

It is true that, on August 28, 1373, a certain Zaccaria da Modena was judicially condemned to be drawn by his feet at the tail of an ass round the public square of Padua, and thence to the cemetery, where he was to be beheaded; and this was so done.<sup>2</sup> On January 23, 1374, by order of the court, Alvisé and Filippo Forzate, Francesco's uncles, were publicly beheaded.<sup>3</sup> But Zaccaria was proved to be an agent of Francesco's brother, Marsilio, who was taking measures, with the aid of the Venetian government, to dispossess Francesco of his sovereignty; and the two latter were conspirators for the assassination of Francesco.<sup>4</sup> Cittadella (p. 343) blames him for his clemency on this latter occasion, since he only sentenced to imprisonment for life, instead of to death, his own brother, Niccolò, and his illegitimate half-brother, Bonifacio, Abbot of Praglia, "non volendo il Signore bruttarsi le mani nel sangue suo."<sup>5</sup>

As to the affection and confidence displayed toward Francesco in the height of his war with Venice (1372), we are told (Cittadella, I, 317): "Neither did the asperities of the war turn the hearts of the

<sup>1</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 41-44. Cittadella's reflections are (I, 234-35, cf. I, 467): "More to be wondered at is the moderation of Francesco, who, naturally ambitious, accustomed to the sudden violence of war, and threatened in his rule and in his life, was able to conquer his own natural propensities, . . . and content himself with a judicial punishment, without resorting to private vengeance. He is the more commendable because he was surrounded with examples of bloody reprisals—a warrior truly magnanimous, who was willing to stain the field of battle with the blood of his enemies, but not the scaffold with that of a citizen and a relative." A modern writer on Italy has said (Heywood, *Palio and Ponte*, London [1904], p. 153): "The *vendetta* was as much a duty as in the days when Dante was ashamed to look upon the face of Geri del Bello, feeling himself a sharer in his shame. Even at their mothers' knees, children were taught the sacred obligations of revenge."

<sup>2</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 189.

<sup>3</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 207.

<sup>4</sup> See Cittadella, I, 331-33, 340-34.

<sup>5</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 206. His own brother, Marsilio, was to receive 15,000 golden ducats a year from Venice if the conspiracy had succeeded (see the written promise by the Doge Andrea Contarini in Cittadella, I, 472-73). For Petrarch's reflections upon the conspiracy, see *Sen.* xiv. 1 (*Opera*, 1581, pp. 931-92).

citizens against Carrara; rather was he so loved that all classes spontaneously offered their money to provide for his needs, and the physicians, with the same hand which they stretched out for the relief of the sick, lavished their gold to restore the strength of the harassed city. . . . Blessings on the prince whose rule represents, in the eyes of his subjects, the public weal."

Concerning the Veronese we may reasonably infer: (1) that he was of station not inferior to Petrarch, and probably of similar rank to the Paduan; (2) that he sometimes visited Padua; (3) that Boccaccio was not personally acquainted with him; (4) that he was harder-hearted, or perhaps harder-headed, than the Paduan.

1. Petrarch, except rarely and for special reasons, mentions in his letters only persons of his own condition—poets, scholars, clericals—or men of distinctly higher rank—princes, cardinals, and the like. Since he speaks of the Veronese as a friend, he presumably belonged to one of these classes. The Veronese friends whose names occur in Petrarch's pages are Guglielmo di Pastrengo, Rinaldo da Villafranca, of the first class, and Mastino II della Scala and Azzo di Correggio, of the second. Of all these, we know that Azzo had died in 1362, Mastino in 1351, Pastrengo before 1370 (probably), while the date of Rinaldo da Villafranca's death is uncertain, though not earlier, it is believed, than 1358.<sup>1</sup> We have no need, then, I shall assume, to reckon with any of these; and Petrarch is scarcely likely to have acquired new friends of his own station in more recent years. It is therefore natural to consider whom he might have known of higher rank. The man who at that time ruled Verona was Can Signorio della Scala (ruled 1359–75). Our reasons for considering it likely that he is the Veronese in question are these:

a) Petrarch had known his father, Mastino, to whom he had addressed a Latin poetical epistle,<sup>2</sup> and who had perhaps urged him to make a considerable visit in Verona in May, 1351<sup>3</sup>—apparently the last time he was in that city.

b) In 1352 a canonry was bestowed upon Petrarch's son, Giovanni, probably by Can Signorio's brother, Can Grande II

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Fracassetti, II, 443; III, 8, 47, 204; V, 344.

<sup>2</sup> *Opera*, 1581, III, 86.

<sup>3</sup> Fracassetti, III, 8, 47.



(d. December 13, 1359). This having been forfeited in 1354, at which time Petrarch himself seems to have fallen into disgrace with Can Grande,<sup>1</sup> was restored by Can Signorio in 1361, and Petrarch was taken back to favor.<sup>2</sup> Petrarch could therefore from this time on consider Can Signorio as a friend.

c) The interest felt by Can Signorio in the arts is shown by his erection of the Clock Tower on the Piazza del Mercato (now Piazza delle Erbe?); of a tower in the Adige near the stone Ponte delle Navi, destroyed by a freshet in 1757; of the wall formerly surrounding the precinct of the Palazzo del Capitano; of the Gardello tower (according to Verci, in the Piazza dei Signori; perhaps confounded by Baedeker with the Clock Tower), but especially by his tomb,<sup>3</sup> the most conspicuous<sup>4</sup> among those of the Scaligers, constructed by Bonino da Campione during Can Signorio's lifetime. His interest in literature can only be conjectured.

2. Whether Can Signorio was likely to have visited Padua in 1373 or 1374 would depend largely upon his relations with Francesco da Carrara, since the distance between Verona and Padua by the indirect railway route is not fifty miles, and from Vicenza, another of Can Signorio's possessions, to Padua, is less than twenty miles. From 1365 to 1369 Can Signorio had been more or less actively in league with Francesco's enemies.<sup>5</sup> Even in March, 1372, he received a

<sup>1</sup> Fracassetti, II, 258, 441.

<sup>2</sup> Fracassetti, V, 344; II, 442; cf. *Opera*, 1581, p. 1023.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Verci, VII, 112. Elsewhere (XIV, 143-44) Verci tells of the great bell that he caused to be placed on the Clock Tower; of the retaining wall built along the Adigetto from the Portoni della Brà, in the heart of the city, to the Adige, with the cellars along it, to serve at need as granaries; and of how, by his own efforts and their influence upon others, he transformed and beautified his city of Vicenza.

<sup>4</sup> See Ruskin, *Stones of Venice*, III, chap. ii: "The stateliest and most sumptuous of the three; it first arrests the eye of the stranger, and long detains it—a many-pinnacled pile surrounded by niches with statues of the warrior saints. It is beautiful, for it still belongs to the noble time, the latter part of the fourteenth century; but . . . its pride may well prepare us to learn that it was built for himself, in his own lifetime, by the man whose statue crowns it, Can Signorio della Scala. . . . Can Signorio was twice a fratricide, the last time when he lay upon his death-bed; his tomb bears upon its gables the images of six virtues—Faith, Hope, Charity, Prudence, and (I believe) Justice and Fortitude."

<sup>5</sup> Verci, XIV, 76, 81, 84, 86, 95, 98, 99, 104, 111, 113, 118, 127; Cittadella, I, 277, 281, 283. Much earlier, in December, 1359, he had taken refuge in Padua (Verci, VII, 110) after his assassination of Can Grande II (see below, p. 138). He was own nephew to Francesco da Carrara, since his father had married Francesco's sister, Taddea, in 1328 (Verci VII, 91).

large sum from Venice, then preparing war against Padua, on condition that the Republic might raise troops in his territories.<sup>1</sup> But by May, 1372, Can Signorio had seen a new light. To an embassy from Francesco, inquiring as to his intentions, he declared that he would not take sides, but nevertheless would be friendly to Francesco.<sup>2</sup> This was at the end of May, and about the same time he sent ambassadors to Louis, King of Hungary, Francesco's ally, to put all his means and power at the disposal of the king.<sup>3</sup> Early in June the Veronese applied to Venice for salt, but were refused, whereupon Francesco offered to let them have all they wanted for five years;<sup>4</sup> this evidently conciliated Can Signorio, for in July he replied to a Hungarian embassy that he would always be obedient to Louis, and serviceable to Francesco.<sup>5</sup> It is significant that the dukes of Bavaria and Austria, having made impossible demands of Can Signorio as a pretext for attacking him, were met with an unqualified refusal from Francesco in October, 1372, when they sought permission from him to conduct their invading troops through the pass of Valsugana, since, as he declared, there was good and firm friendship between Can Signorio and himself.<sup>6</sup> Can Signorio, it is true, took no active part in the war<sup>7</sup>—he loved building rather than fighting<sup>8</sup>—and we are told that Zaccaria da Modena<sup>9</sup> endeavored to have him transmit a letter of his to the Venetian government;<sup>10</sup> but there is no proof that the Lord of Verona was privy to its contents.

The relations between Can Signorio and Francesco must have grown increasingly intimate during these latter years, for on August 20, 1375,<sup>11</sup> a contract of marriage was drawn up in the former's palace at Verona between Francesco Novello and Taddea, daughter of Niccolò II, Marquis of Este, Ferrara, and Modena (1361–88).

<sup>1</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 70, 72; Verci, XIV, 159; Cittadella, I, 310.

<sup>2</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 73–74.

<sup>3</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 87–88; Verci, XIV, 172; Cittadella, I, 309.

<sup>4</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 89–90; Verci, XIV, 172; Cittadella, I, 309.

<sup>5</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 93, 96.

<sup>6</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 108.

<sup>7</sup> Verci, XIV, 208.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. p. 136, and note 3.

<sup>9</sup> See p. 134.

<sup>10</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 188; Verci, XIV, 223.

<sup>11</sup> The marriage itself did not take place till May 31, 1379.

Niccolò had married Can Signorio's sister Verde on May 19, 1362,<sup>1</sup> and Taddea (b. 1365) was the fruit of this union. In relation to the contract, Can Signorio not only acted as the maternal uncle of the bride, but also as the representative of her father.<sup>2</sup> There can be no question, then, that the projected marriage was entirely agreeable to the former, and this argues great friendliness at this time between himself and Francesco da Carrara.

That Can Signorio, his junior by perhaps fifteen years, might have visited Francesco at some time between the spring of 1373 and that of 1374, will, then, surprise no one.

3. Seeing that Boccaccio did not meet Petrarch till October, 1350, that he visited the latter at Padua in the spring of 1351, and that Petrarch was probably not in Verona after June, 1351,<sup>3</sup> he could not have visited Petrarch there; nor have we reason to suppose that he had any opportunity of meeting Can Signorio through any other agency than that of Petrarch.

We are now in a position to understand better Petrarch's polite phraseology, when he refers to Can Signorio as a "friend of ours" (*amicus noster*), and then immediately adds, "for all is common between us, even our friends" (*sunt enim nobis, ut reliqua, sic amici etiam communes*). The explanation sufficiently shows that Can Signorio was not the "common friend" that we have reason to suppose Francesco da Carrara to have been.

4. That Can Signorio was harder-hearted than Francesco da Carrara may be inferred from his slaying of his elder brother, Can

<sup>1</sup> Verci, XIV, 25; VII, 106.

<sup>2</sup> See *Miscellanea di Storia Veneta* (ed. R. Dep. Veneta di Storia Patria), II, 9 (1903), 158-61. It is worth noting that Francesco, Niccolò, and Can Signorio had been leagued together as early as 1362 (Verci, XIV, 27; Cittadella, I, 260). On February 9, 1371, Francesco orders the Podestà of Belluno to collect as many live kids as possible, and send them to Padua for a gift to Niccolò, who, on his journey back with Francesco and Petrarch from the funeral of Urban V in Bologna on January 3 (if we may trust Verci, XIV, 150; *Documenti*, pp. 70-71), had expressed a wish for them.

There was cordial friendship between Niccolò and Petrarch. In April, 1370, Petrarch set out from Padua for Rome, but, on arriving at Ferrara, fell into a swoon, and was actually regarded as dead, but finally recovered. On this occasion he experienced great kindness from Niccolò (*Sen.* xiii. 17; *Opera*, 1581, p. 896). We have two letters from the poet to him, one dissuading him from taking part in tournaments (*Sen.* xi. 13), and another of consolation (*Sen.* xiii. 1).

<sup>3</sup> Fracassetti, I, 179; V, 539. Boccaccio may possibly have passed through Verona in December, 1351, on his way to the Tyrol, or in February, 1352, on his return journey (Körting, *Boccaccio's Leben und Werke*, pp. 193-95, 275); but Petrarch had left there in June, 1351, never to return (*Fam.* xi. 6, 7; Fracassetti, III, 8).

Grande II, in 1359,<sup>1</sup> from his imprisonment of another brother, Paolo Alboino, joint ruler with himself, in 1365, and his murdering of the latter in 1375.<sup>2</sup> The chronicler, Andrea Gataro, tells us that, feeling himself sick unto death, Can Signorio wrote to Francesco da Carrara, asking him whether he would advise that the lordship of Verona be left to the legitimate heir, Paolo Alboino, or to his own bastard sons, Bartolomeo and Antonio. Francesco replied that by leaving Verona to his brother, he would acquire great honor in this world, and glory in the next, and that, by way of compensation, he could leave Vicenza, and others of his possessions, to his sons. Thereupon Can Signorio instantly summoned four trusty henchmen, and thus commanded them: "Go at once to Peschiera, where you will find my brother, Paolo Alboino, and slay him; do this, and I will make you all rich, seeing that my object is to leave my sons lords." On their return, the murderers reported that they had obeyed his orders. "Then," said he, "I shall die content," proceeded to make his will, and three days later, to die, October 19, 1375, at the age of thirty-five.<sup>3</sup>

If the foregoing identifications are accepted, they will serve at once to throw a little additional light upon two famous Italian rulers of the later fourteenth century, and at the same time to illustrate how their respective reactions, upon the reading of the story, corresponded to their historical characters—Francesco yielding to the sweetness of Griselda's nature, and Can Signorio refusing to believe that such a nature was possible.

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<sup>1</sup> Verci, VII, 108.

<sup>2</sup> Verci, VII, 113.

<sup>3</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 216. Verci (VII, 110, 111) calls him malevolent, treacherous, abominable (*cattivo, traditore, scellerato*). Suspecting a conspiracy against himself in 1365, he had many people of consequence slain, and shortly after imposed new and oppressive taxes, and seized for his own use the revenues of various ecclesiastical benefices in Verona and Vicenza (Verci, VII, 111). He had caused his sons to be proclaimed as his successors on October 15, 1375 (Verci, VII, 114), the day before he sent assassins to Paolo Alboino. They came to no good ends: Bartolomeo (b. 1360) was assassinated by his brother's orders on July 12, 1381, and Antonio (b. 1362) was expelled from his dominions by Gian Galeazzo Visconti on October 18, 1387, dying in exile September 3, 1388, perhaps of poison (Verci, VII, 114-16). With him ended the rule of the Scaligers, his son, Can Francesco, being poisoned at Ravenna a few years later by order of Gian Galeazzo (Verci, VII, 116).